AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) An automated, computer-implemented method for carrying out financial transactions within a Central Securities Depository (CSD), comprising an automated, computer-implemented clearing process and an automated, computer-implemented settlement process, the clearing process preparing a financial transaction for the settlement process using the following automated, computer-implemented sub-process steps:

- providing a set of settlement rules to be followed in the clearing process,

- selecting, by a first computer process, a settlement rule from the set of settlement rules to be followed in the clearing process, the settlement rule defining how the financial transaction is to be settled,

- defining, by a second computer process, a settlement instruction group including a number of settlement instructions to be settled at the same time, where the settlement instructions describe obligations of participants to the financial transaction,

- following the selecting and defining steps, locking-in, by a third computer process, the assets to which the financial transaction concerns, the locking-in having the effect of reserving said assets for a specific settlement,

- reserving by the third computer process said assets for the specific settlement based on the locking-in step, thereby clearing the financial transaction for settlement,

and the settlement process includes the following automated, computer-implemented sub-process steps:

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- providing a set of transfer instructions,

- selecting, by a <u>fourth</u> computer process, transfer instructions from the set of transfer instructions for all settlement instructions belonging to said settlement instruction group, said transfer instructions being irrevocable instructions to transfer the locked-in assets between participants in the CSD,

- <u>transferring by the fourth computer process the locked-in assets between the participants in the CSD,</u>

- checking, by a <u>fifth</u> computer process, that said transfer instructions are carried out successfully to complete settlement of the financial transaction, and

- following the selecting and checking steps, reporting, by a <u>sixth</u> computer process, the result of the settlement to participants involved in the financial transaction.

2.   (currently amended) An automated system for carrying out financial transactions within a Central Securities Depository (CSD), said system comprising:

a computer having an input <u>for receiving financial transaction information</u> and a output, wherein the computer is configured to perform an automated function for a clearing process and an automated function for a settlement process, the computer being configured to implement the clearing process function for a financial transaction using the following computer implemented sub-functions:

- ~~an~~ <u>a first</u> automated sub-function for the selection from a set of provided settlement rules of a settlement rule to be used in the clearing process, the settlement rule defining how the financial transaction is to be settled,

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- ~~an~~ a second automated sub-function for the definition of a settlement instruction group including a number of settlement instructions to be settled at the same time, where the settlement instructions describe obligations of participants involved in the financial transaction, ~~and~~

- ~~an~~ a third automated sub-function for locking-in the assets to which the financial transaction concern, the locking-in having the effect of the system reserving said assets for a specific settlement, for reserving said assets for the specific settlement based on the locking-in step, thereby clearing the financial transaction for settlement and

  wherein the computer is configured to perform the settlement process function using the following computer-implemented sub-functions:

- ~~an~~ a fourth automated sub-function for selecting transfer instructions from a set of provided transfer instructions for all settlement instructions belonging to said settlement instruction group, said transfer instructions being irrevocable instructions to transfer the locked-in assets between participants in the CSD, and for transferring the locked-in assets between participants in the CSD,

- ~~an~~ a fifth automated sub-function for checking that said transfer instructions are carried out successfully to complete the settlement of the financial transaction, and

- ~~an~~ a sixth automated sub-function for reporting via the output the result of the settlement to participants involved in the financial transaction.

3.   Canceled.